

August 9, 2002

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Richard Shumsky
Chief Probation Officer

SUBJECT: **ESCAPES FROM CENTRAL JUVENILE HALL –
CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN**

This is in response to your Board's motion of August 6, 2002 in which you instruct the Chief Probation Officer to prepare and submit a comprehensive corrective action plan within one week regarding the three minors who escaped from Central Juvenile Hall on July 31, 2002.

On July 31, 2002 at approximately 11:35 PM three minors, apparently armed with a firearm that had been in undetected, escaped from Central Juvenile Hall (CJH). The brandishing of a firearm by a detained youth is an unprecedented and severe breach of security in the juvenile halls.

On August 6, 2002, at approximately 11:30 AM a minor escaped from the custody of a CJH staff while at a specialty medical clinic appointment at LAC+USC Medical Center. Security of minors transported outside the secure perimeter of our juvenile halls presents additional security issues that are incorporated within this report.

Following is our action plan to enhance security systems and procedures at CJH, and at Los Padrinos (LPJH) and Barry J. Nidorf (BJNJH) Juvenile Halls. This report discusses specific security measures that are needed to prevent access to a weapon in our facilities that could then be used by a minor to escape or harm staff or other minors. Enhancing security requires the expanded use of metal detectors and search techniques, and a rethinking and review of existing security practices and procedures.

A significant number of our recommendations focus on enforcement of a higher degree of compliance with existing policies and procedures; these do not require additional resources. Security enhancements, such as perimeter patrols, increased lighting, and motion sensors, will require additional resources. The discussion of facility security is followed by security enhancements relative to transport of minors outside of our detention facilities. Escape statistics and a list of our recommendations are included as Attachments I and II, respectively.

JULY 31, 2002, INCIDENT BACKGROUND

The minors were assigned to individual locked rooms within the Special Handling Unit (SHU). Twenty-one minors were housed in the SHU the night of the escape. Three Group Supervisor, Nights (GSN) staff were on duty, which is well over the 30:1 minor-to-staff supervision ratio required by the State Board of Corrections.

The minors who escaped were:

MINOR'S NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	CHARGE
Jose Rene Argueta	DOB 08/17/84	PC 187 murder
Fernando Sergio Nupiri	DOB 08/01/84	PC 211 robbery
Marvin Alexander Sandoval	DOB 03/17/85	PC 187 murder

Minor Argueta requested and was allowed out of his room to utilize a drinking fountain. GSN John Montez was the staff who opened the minor's door. The minor produced a firearm and ordered the three GSN's on-duty, Mr. Montez, Lanier Jurineak, Jr., and Thomas Rubledo, to lie on the floor. He subsequently forced one staff to unlock the rooms of two other minors. The three minors handcuffed the three staff, removed staffs' wallets, cell phones, keys, and other personal belongings, and locked the staff in a utility room.

Under normal circumstances, one youth cannot overpower three staff. A gun changes this equation. The possession of a firearm by one of the minors negated the staffs' ability to exercise control. A major focus of this report is thus devoted to how the gun entered the facility, and security controls that would likely detect attempts to bring a firearm into the facility. We also discuss controls to ensure if a weapon should pass through security undetected it would be discovered before a minor has the opportunity to use it to facilitate escape or harm staff, other minors, or him/herself. These security measures include, among various scenarios, screening of visitors, use of metal detectors, evaluation of existing search techniques, and use of security cameras.

The minors are believed to have exited the facility using a five-foot ladder obtained from the utility room, and bed sheets tied together as a makeshift rope. The ladder was positioned on a three-foot tall stump of a palm tree and leaned against a storage building wall to gain roof access. The minors are then believed to have traversed from the storage building roof by climbing across a wall that connects the building's roof to the facility's perimeter wall. Bed sheets tied into a makeshift rope were used to repel down the outside of the perimeter wall.

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Approximately thirty minutes later the staff locked in the utility room were discovered by another staff who arrived to pick up some paperwork. LAPD was called, established a perimeter, and searched the facility utilizing a police dog. Local law enforcement was notified in the communities from which the minors resided. In addition, each minor's parents/guardians were notified as was Probation's DISARM team. Bench warrants were requested from the Court.

Palm trees near the perimeter wall of CJH were not as tall as the wall, would be extremely difficult to climb, and their branches are protected by sharp thorns. However, we believed it to be a prudent step to remove the trees that are within reasonably close proximity to walls and buildings.

Each minor had at least one visitor during the week prior to the July 31 escape. Minor Argueta received a visitor on July 27, and two visitors on July 28. Each of his visitors were his cousins. His visitor on July 27 was approved by a Probation supervisor. His two visitors on July 28 were Court-ordered. Minor Nupiri's only visitor was an Operation Read staff on July 29, 30, and 31. Minor Sandoval was visited by his mother each Sunday in July. Sandoval also had a visit from a religious volunteer on July 31, and a Court-ordered visit from a cousin and a brother on July 19. Visitor information has been provided to law enforcement for consideration as part of their investigation into how a gun entered juvenile hall.

HIGH RISK YOUTH SECURITY ISSUES

BUILDING SECURITY

The design of many of the buildings at CJH, including the SHU, is based upon standards in effect when they were constructed forty or more years ago. CJH's SHU living units are long, narrow buildings that present inherent security and supervision weaknesses when compared to modern detention facility design standards. It is because of the inherent security weaknesses in these older building configurations that Probation, with support and approval of the Board of Supervisors and Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), advocated and was awarded State funding of \$49.5 million to construct modern and more secure facilities at CJH and LPJH respectively. County matching funds of \$20.9 million have been committed to these projects.

New podular-designed structures at BJNJH have been open for approximately three years, and there have been no escapes of minors from these living units. Podular-designed living units are currently under construction at CJH, and similarly designed structures are in the planning stages for LPJH. The new CJH and LPJH structures will each house 240 minors. All new construction is situated away from perimeter walls.

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Unfit and violent offenders will be relocated into the new CJH and LPJH structures when construction is complete. CJH's and LPJH's new units are anticipated to be complete in 2004.

CJH's SHU contains single-bunked rooms that include toilet and sink facilities, commonly referred to as "wet" rooms. The flow of water from the sink is active only while the minor pushes a button. Drinking water is difficult to obtain from the sink without a container to catch the water. As a matter of policy the number of items in a minor's room, including cups, is restricted to limit the availability of hiding places for contraband, and to limit the amount of material from which a weapon could be fashioned. Thus, it is not unusual for minors to request a drink of water even though they have a sink in their rooms.

The sequence of events that resulted in the escape began with a minor's request to leave his secured wet room to get a drink of water. Effective immediately, minors housed in wet rooms will be provided with paper cups overnight to prevent the need to open doors during sleeping hours. In addition, wet room doors will not be opened during sleeping hours except for a safety or medical emergency, and, as required by existing Department policy, then not opened without one staff within close proximity to a panic button or knock-off telephone. Prior to opening a door, staff are to visually inspect the minor by ordering him/her to turn in a complete circle with arms out to his/her sides. Loose clothing is to be lifted to expose potential hiding places.

Recommendations

1. Minors housed in wet rooms are to be provided with paper cups overnight to prevent the need to open doors during sleeping hours.
2. Probation staff are to follow existing procedures and ensure sinks in occupied wet rooms are operational.
3. Minors' doors are not to be opened during sleeping hours except for a safety or medical emergency.
4. Probation ensure that staff are aware of and comply with current policy that if a minor's door must be opened during sleeping hours, one staff will be stationed within close proximity to a panic button or knock-off telephone until the minor is secured in his/her room.
5. Prior to opening a door, staff are to visually inspect the minor by ordering him/her to turn in a complete circle with arms out to his/her sides. Loose clothing is to be lifted to expose potential contraband hiding places.

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METAL DETECTORS

Each of the three juvenile halls is equipped with walk-through metal detectors and metal detection wands. In addition, LPJH and BJNJH have conveyor-type baggage screening machines similar to those used at airports. The effectiveness of metal detection devices is limited by:

- staff familiarity with the machines,
- staff familiarity with Department policies and procedures,
- staff willingness to confront individuals when an alarm tone sounds,
- the integrity of each machine's ability to detect metal objects, and
- the enforcement of requirements that all entrants to juvenile halls must pass through the metal detectors.

Visiting day is on Sunday, and each juvenile hall screens Sunday visitors through metal detection devices and/or with hand-held wands. The use of metal detectors Monday through Saturday is inconsistent.

At CJH, staff and some visitors, community volunteers, and contract employees are not required to pass through the metal detector. For example, contracted food service workers enter the facility without being screened. Managers and staff at CJH expressed their common belief that the CJH metal detector is unreliable. If in fact the CJH metal detector is not operating properly, it should be repaired or replaced.

The metal detector at BJNJH sounds an alarm tone somewhat regularly when staff and others (contract employees, trades-people, teachers, health workers, etc.) enter the facility. Staff assigned to BJNJH's entrance may be unwilling or unaware of the need to confront a coworker or other persons. On non-visiting days, alarms that sound are commonly ignored as individuals enter the facility. In addition, staff may perceive of a need to expedite entry activity to avoid delaying staff and visitors. BJNJH staff screen Sunday visitors, including using a baggage screening machine and hand-held wands.

At LPJH Sheriff Department Custody Assistants staff both a metal detector and baggage screener Monday through Friday from 7:00 AM until 5:00 PM. The Sheriff's staff are present due to the common front door LPJH shares with the Court. At times Sheriff's staff allow Probation staff to pass through unchecked, especially during heavy traffic periods such as shift changes. After 5:00 PM and on weekends only a metal detector is used, and it inconsistently results in a challenge by the attending staff when a co-worker passing through has activated a detection signal. Prior to the July 31 escapes from CJH, Sheriff's staff were in the process of training Probation staff on the use of the baggage screener.

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Effective immediately, all walk-in persons entering juvenile halls must pass through a metal detection device. All persons will be effectively cleared prior to being allowed entry if a metal detection device signals a potential security issue. All juvenile halls are to enforce a single point of entry for all walk-in entrants. All bags/items entering the facility, and delivery and construction vehicles and drivers will be subject to screening, escort, and/or a thorough search. Random, documented searches will be conducted of the possessions and/or vehicles of staff, tradesmen, educators, volunteers, health workers, contractors, and delivery persons except to the extent necessary to protect information created as part of a fiduciary duty of confidentiality provided by statute. In addition, we are developing criteria for the scope of personal items that staff may bring into juvenile halls.

Recommendations

6. Ensure the CJH metal detector is operating properly.
7. Implement a new policy that all walk-in persons entering juvenile halls must pass through a metal detection device.
8. All persons will be effectively cleared prior to being allowed entry if a metal detection device signals a potential security issue.
9. To the extent possible, all juvenile halls are to enforce a single point of entry for all walk-in entrants.
10. All bags/items entering the facility, and delivery and construction vehicles and drivers will be subject to screening, escort, and/or a thorough search.
11. Probation will work with the CAO to identify funding for the purchase of a baggage screening machine for CJH.
12. Random, documented searches will be conducted of the possessions and/or vehicles of all persons entering the facility, including staff, contractors, educators, health workers, trades people, volunteers, and delivery persons except to the extent necessary to protect information created as part of a fiduciary duty of confidentiality provided by statute.
13. Probation should consider contracting for entrance security specialists with responsibility to consistently enforce entrant screening protocols.
14. Probation develop criteria for the scope of personal items staff may bring into juvenile halls.

UNFIT MINORS

The District Attorney has the discretion to prosecute in adult court certain crimes attributable to juvenile defendants. The juvenile defendants are considered “unfit” for juvenile court due to the serious and/or violent nature of their alleged criminal act. These acts are often referred to by Welfare and Institutions Code section “707(b),” that specifies violent crimes for which juveniles may be prosecuted in adult court. Two of the juvenile escapees were detained for murder and were therefore classified as unfit minors held for 707(b) offenses. One of them, minor Sandoval, was convicted on July 29 of murder and was awaiting sentencing. Minor Argueta was pending trial, also on a murder charge.

The sentence associated with a sustained 707(b) charge against a juvenile in adult court is likely much more severe than in a juvenile court. Possible sentencing includes a significant period in a California Youth Authority facility, and/or transfer to an adult State prison.

Minors classified as unfit have demonstrated their willingness to commit the most serious criminal acts, generally are more criminally sophisticated, and have a greater incentive to flee to avoid long-term incarceration. Because of their higher risk, these minors are generally housed in juvenile hall SHU living units. Unfit minors who become a distraction or disturbance to juvenile hall operations are remanded for detention in the Sheriff’s jail. Minors who have been convicted and sentenced to State prison are subsequently transferred to prison authorities.

California’s Welfare and Institutions Code, Sections 207.1, 208.5, and 707.1 provide for minors tried in adult court to be detained in Sheriff facilities. The Sheriff generally has the resources, training, and facilities to provide for the higher level of security these offenders require. Juvenile courts regularly order that these minors remain detained in juvenile hall pending resolution of the court trial.

Serious violent offenders are segregated from the general population within the juvenile halls to the extent necessary to maintain order. Court action is requested to transfer to the Sheriff those minors who are a danger to juvenile hall operations. However, the risk that a minor classified as unfit will attempt escape and/or commit a violent act is much greater than for a minor who faces shorter-term detention in a juvenile camp setting, placement, or possible community detention.

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Currently there are approximately 103 minors classified as unfit and detained in the three juvenile halls. Approximately 36 additional minors are housed in Sheriff facilities capable of providing legally required "sight and sound separation" housing for juvenile defendants detained in adult facilities. Minors who reach the age of majority can be housed with adult inmates.

As discussed above, minor Sandoval had recently been convicted in adult court of murder and was facing many years of incarceration in State prison. Minor Argueta faced a similar sentence if convicted of a similar charge. Minors Argueta and Nupiri will reach 18-years of age in August 2002. The incentive was high for Sandoval and Argueta to attempt escape. This incentive poses a significant threat to juvenile hall staff as minors such as these escapees may have little if any concern for the personal safety of others as they attempt to evade prison.

The distractions to the program for the general population of minors within the juvenile halls, and the security risk associated with unfit minors would be reduced by transferring unfits to a more secure setting. Probation will work with the Sheriff and the Court to explore the efficacy of moving all unfit minors and 18-year-olds into Sheriff custody.

Recommendation

15. Probation, in collaboration with the Sheriff and the Court, explore the efficacy of moving all unfit minors into Sheriff custody.

As a potential augmentation to detention within Sheriff's facilities, the Probation Department is reviewing with the Sheriff the option to utilize vacant portions of the Sheriff's Lynwood Justice Center lock-up facilities to house unfit minors. Staffing options, site planning, and cost estimates are being developed in collaboration with the Sheriff and will be separately forwarded to your Board.

Recommendation

16. Probation examine the use of vacant portions of the Lynwood Justice Center to house unfit minors.

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A graduated level of disposition options are applicable for youth found to have committed an offense. The disposition is based on many factors such as the home environment, applicable State code, criminal history, and the nature and circumstances of the offense. These options may include, in order of increasing severity, community detention, placement, camp, commitment to the California Youth Authority (CYA), or in the most severe cases State prison.

Los Angeles is the County of origin for approximately 1,500 youth detained in CYA facilities. Each month youth receive CYA commitments from the Court. Documentation issues and mental, medical, and educational assessments can slow the process of moving a youth to the CYA. Delays in this process result in youth detained in juvenile halls awaiting transfer. Youth ordered to CYA are generally more sophisticated, older, and have committed more severe crimes. In addition, CYA commitments are generally for longer periods of time, frequently one year or more. Thus, youth with a pending transfer to CYA have a greater incentive to escape to avoid the longer-term CYA commitment. Probation will be reviewing our process for transferring minors to CYA, and expediting the process where possible.

Recommendation

17. Probation review the process for transferring minors to the California Youth Authority, and expedite the process where possible.

CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION (CCTV)

One living unit in each of the BJNJH and Central Juvenile Halls has CCTV cameras that were installed in June 2002. LPJH's CCTV cameras were installed in 2001. CCTV cameras in the common areas of the three halls' living units had not been activated pending agreement with collective bargaining organizations. The Department had been seeking bids for installation of CCTV in all living units. Each juvenile hall has at least eleven living units, and the configuration of these units varies.

CCTV cameras are capable of recording activity within common areas of living units, and generally do not view personally sensitive areas such as restrooms. The limited number of CCTV cameras that are within minors' sleeping rooms are in use to monitor minors with "constant with supervision" court orders due to suicidal tendencies, and are not connected to recording capability.

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The Department's initial intent when CCTV cameras were installed was to enable evidentiary recording in the event of an incident such as use-of-force, allegation of abuse, or a breach of security. Monitoring screens for CCTV cameras are in designated electrical rooms at CJH and LPJH. Monitoring screens at BJNJH are in the Superintendent's office.

As a result of the escapes, effective August 1, 2002, all available CCTV cameras have been activated. Prior to this incident the Department had been seeking bids to expand CCTV capability. It is estimated that the cost of equipping a single living unit with CCTV capability could exceed \$100,000, including wiring and equipment. We will continue on the course of CCTV expansion, and work with the CAO to identify resources to ensure its expeditious installation. In addition, we will explore capability to provide on-demand observation from a centralized security post of all CCTV cameras. New construction currently underway at CJH, and construction plans for LPJH include CCTV.

Recommendations

18. Probation activate around-the-clock all CCTV cameras, including recording and archiving features where available.
19. Probation collaborate with the CAO to identify resources to ensure the expeditious expansion of CCTV capability to all living units.
20. Probation plan for the implementation and staffing of on-demand observation capability from a centralized security post for all CCTV cameras. This will require movement of existing CCTV observation screens to an area accessible to assigned security observation staff.
21. Probation consider hiring specialized staff to monitor CCTV activity.

PANIC BUTTONS & KNOCK-OFF PHONES

Panic buttons and knock-off phones are in use to varying extent at each of the three juvenile halls. Knock-off telephones signal security staff of a problem 15-seconds after the phone handset is removed from its receiver. Panic buttons send an instant distress signal to a designated location.

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CJH's SHU has knock-off telephones. LPJH and BJNJH have 15-second delay knock-off telephones in all living units that signal staff in the centralized Movement and Control unit. BJNJH also has panic buttons in the offices of mental health staff that provide an instant audible alarm to Probation staff within the building.

While knock-off telephones are a valuable safety feature, instantaneous panic buttons provide a greater level of safety. It is possible staff may have had the opportunity to activate a panic button during the July 31 escape. However, the delay inherent in a knock-off telephone would have provided the CJH escapees with time to order staff to replace the telephone thereby overcoming the knock-off functionality. Probation needs to ensure panic buttons are available within all living units, and that staff are aware of and drilled in the appropriate response when alarms activate.

Sheriff's deputies working in custody facilities carry radios that have built-in panic button functionality. Activation of a deputy's panic button will notify the facility's centralized security of the need for emergency assistance, and identify the deputy to whom the radio is assigned. Probation should consider the use of radios with panic button functionality for use within its juvenile halls.

Recommendations

22. Probation ensure panic buttons are available within all living units, and that staff are aware of and drilled in the appropriate response when alarms activate.
23. Probation consider the use of radios with panic button functionality for use within its juvenile halls, and work with the CAO and Board of Supervisors to identify applicable resource needs.

TRAINING

During the events that led to the July 31 escapes, possible deviations from policies and procedures could have contributed to the inability to disclose the escape in progress. Deviations from policy may occur due to staff's familiarity with minors who are detained for extended periods of time. Staff familiar with minors could then become complacent regarding enforcement of established protocols. For example:

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- **SEARCHES** – Searches conducted according to existing protocols should have disclosed the firearm. It is possible that staff who searched the escapees' living units searched only possessions and easily accessible areas. Mattresses and pillows may not have been carefully inspected, and the minors themselves may not have been patted-down, visually inspected, and/or "wanded" with a hand-held metal detector. Each of these search criteria is a prudent activity depending on the circumstances when conducting a thorough search. A thorough search of the juvenile halls was conducted following the July 31 escape, and daily searches will continue to be an integral part of security procedures. In addition, effective immediately minors' room assignments will be randomly altered to reduce the opportunity for longer-term concealment of contraband.
- **KEY CONTROLS** – The LAPD found outside the perimeter walls of CJH some of the possessions stolen from the GSN's. With these possessions were four CJH door keys. However, only three GSN's were working in the SHU that night. The fourth key was assigned to a staff working elsewhere in the facility, who was issued yet another key. Thus, she had two keys assigned to her, yet key control staff did not notice the issuance of multiple keys to one individual.
- **ESCORTING MINORS** – The minor who requested a drink of water was allowed to walk to the drinking fountain without close escort. It is possible the minor had the firearm either in his waistband at the time of exiting the room, or retrieved the firearm from within the common areas of the building such as behind the drinking fountain. Minors are to be escorted, and staff appropriately positioned, whenever minors are allowed out of rooms during sleeping hours.
- **HOSTAGE SITUATIONS** – The presence of the firearm within the locked confines of the SHU made escape unlikely for the three GSN's on duty. The circumstances could have potentially resulted in a longer-term hostage situation. However, if one of the staff could have summoned other personnel outside the SHU while the minors were still within the facility, the escape may have been thwarted.

Recommendations

24. Staff will receive regular refresher training, as is currently available, on proper dorm search techniques.
25. Minors' room assignments will be randomly altered to reduce the opportunity for longer-term concealment of contraband.

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26. Facility managers enforce and regularly review key controls, and conduct periodic key inventories. Disciplinary action should be taken when key control procedures are not followed.
27. Probation establish a system where staff identification is exchanged for an interior facility key at the start of each shift.
28. Perimeter door locks should be re-keyed. Facility perimeter access keys need to be restricted to a very limited number of critical staff including the Superintendent, Maintenance Manager, and Officer-of-the-Day.
29. Minors are to be escorted, and staff appropriately positioned, according to existing policies whenever minors are allowed out of rooms during sleeping hours.
30. Staff receive enhanced training on appropriate protocols in the event of a potential or actual hostage situation.

PERIMETER SECURITY

Buildings within the three juvenile halls were designed and built at various times and with differing technology. Some of the buildings at CJH date to the early 1900's, while BJNJH has some relatively modern living units that opened in 1999. Most of the structures at LPJH were built in the 1950's and 60's.

Depending on the age of each facility and the common building practices of the times, security strengths and or weaknesses are present. Modern detention facilities do not include fencing that abuts to or comes within close proximity to a structure. The modern design is intended to prevent detainees from using structures to compromise perimeter security. As discussed previously in this report, Probation advocated and was awarded funding during the previous two years to construct modern living units within CJH and LPJH. New structures will not be within close proximity to perimeter walls.

The school building at CJH abuts to the perimeter wall, providing an avenue for fleeing minors to climb high enough on the building's exterior to scale the perimeter wall. CJH staff believe it is common knowledge among detained youth that the accessibility of the school building to the perimeter wall provides a weak link in perimeter security. The height of the school building, and coiled razor wire at its apex, provide a challenge to anyone attempting to compromise the perimeter. Youth who have attempted to flee in the past appear to favor the school building as a potential path over the perimeter wall.

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As described above, the three escapees are believed to have exited the facility using a small ladder obtained from a utility room, and bed sheets tied together as a makeshift rope. The ladder was positioned on the stump of a palm tree and leaned against a storage building wall to gain roof access. The minors are then believed to have traversed from the storage building roof by climbing across a wall that connects the building's roof to the facility's perimeter wall. Bed sheets tied into a makeshift rope were used to repel down the outside of the perimeter wall. The area traversed by the minors is protected by barbed wire rather than razor wire.

Probation is collaborating with a detention facility security expert from the Sheriff's Department to assess the perimeter security needs of CJH. Additional recommendations will be provided to the CAO and Board upon conclusion of this assessment. These recommendations may include, but are not limited to raising the front roof façade, adding more razor wire or other physical impediments, adding security screening to existing windows, and installing strategically placed motion sensing alarms and lighting. Particular emphasis will be placed on those areas with foothold or handhold potential. In the interim, all trees will be removed if they are in close proximity to the perimeter wall or abutting structures.

Recommendations

31. Probation provide the CAO and Board with an assessment of additional perimeter and facility security needs.
32. Probation arrange for the removal of all trees that are in close proximity to the perimeter wall or abutting structures.
33. Replace all barbed wire protection with razor wire.

The three escapees had to have taken some time to create makeshift ropes out of bed linens, identify a point of attempted egress, and climb over the perimeter wall. Late at night very few staff are walking among buildings within the CJH compound. Motion sensing lights and alarms that signal centralized security staff may have prevented the minors from scaling the perimeter wall. Such lights and alarms could have compromised the 15-30 minutes that the fleeing minors may have gone undetected.

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All juvenile halls have had incidents of minors climbing on buildings regardless of the building's location relative to perimeter walls. Minors may climb a building and hide hoping that pursuing staff will not find them, and providing time for the minor to devise a means to compromise perimeter security. During a nighttime juvenile hall search for a fleeing minor, it is difficult and dangerous to locate a minor on a rooftop due to darkness and the potential for a rooftop confrontation. In addition, a significant number of minors have diagnosed mental disorders which could impair their rational thoughts while in such a precarious location.

Recommendation

34. Rooftop motion and/or heat activated floodlights and, where necessary, CCTV be installed at all juvenile halls to facilitate the safe identification of the whereabouts of fleeing minors.

In addition to motion and/or heat sensing lights and alarms, a visual presence within the facility would reduce the time a fleeing minor has to evade detection. Early detection provides the opportunity for Probation and law enforcement to block escape routes, ascertain direction, and heighten the opportunity to capture the minor. Staff infrequently walk outside juvenile hall buildings during normal sleeping hours. A roving patrol would increase the visual presence of staff, and potentially thwart an escape attempt.

Recommendation

35. Probation identify a staff on overnight shifts to patrol the interior perimeter of the facility.

As discussed above, each juvenile hall was constructed at various times and with differing building designs and locations. Thus, the perimeter walls present unique security challenges at each hall.

A portion of the perimeter wall at CJH is adjacent to a storage yard operated by the County Internal Services Department (ISD). The fence around and the contents within the storage yard impede the view of CJH's perimeter wall from the outside. The impeded view provides a location for members of the public, including those who may want to facilitate the escape of a detained youth, to throw objects over the wall such as weapons or rope. Motion and/or heat sensing lights and alarms, and a controllable CCTV camera mounted on a portion of CJH's perimeter wall adjacent to ISD's storage yard, would address this security weakness.

Recommendation

36. Probation install strategically placed motion and or heat sensing lights, along with a remote controllable CCTV camera, along the portion of the perimeter wall adjacent to ISD's storage yard.

COUNTY POLICE

When the escape incident occurred CJH staff followed notification protocols including notifying LAPD and the County's Police. CJH staff called what they believed was the County Police's switchboard. In fact CJH staff had called the LAC+USC switchboard, delaying participation of the County Police in establishing a containment perimeter until the arrival of the LAPD.

In addition to contact issues, CJH staff had no direct means of communication with the County Police Officer assigned to the facility other than to relay messages through the County Police switchboard. This relay method of communication hampers the responsiveness of the officer.

BJNJH has devised a system of direct communication with the County Police Officer assigned to that facility. Staff can communicate directly with the officer through a common radio frequency. In addition, BJNJH has an established procedure requiring the officer to check-in hourly with BJNJH staff.

LPJH has a County Police Officer assigned to the facility sporadically depending upon the availability of officer staffing. Both LPJH and BJNJH have less cumbersome facility exterior designs to patrol. LPJH relies primarily on the Downey and South Gate police for responses to escape attempts. The juvenile halls need to standardize communication protocols, and practice for responses to escapes and other emergencies.

Probation and County Police have agreed to new protocols to ensure adequate nighttime coverage and communication between the halls and the assigned police officer. These protocols will be implemented this month, and will be defined within a Memorandum of Understanding between the two agencies.

In the past a County Police Officer was assigned to the facilities if one was available for scheduling. At times an officer was on-duty only for a portion of the evening, or not at all depending upon officer vacations, willingness to take overtime shifts, and other priorities. County Police have agreed to provide a dedicated officer at each of the juvenile halls. County Police indicate that staffing assigned to LPJH and the neighboring Rancho Los Amigos Hospital may be limited in a few months due to Department of Health Services funding issues.

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County Police also suggested that Probation identify a specific location for each of its radios so transmissions can be traced back to a specific source.

Recommendations

37. Probation and County Police implement regular daily schedules for dedicated County Police patrols between the hours of 8:00 PM and 6:00 AM.
38. Each day Probation supply the on-duty County Police Officer with a radio that provides direct communication to Probation's Officer-of-the-Day.
39. Every fifteen minutes while on patrol the on-duty County Police Officer will communicate with designated Probation staff to ensure awareness of pertinent information.
40. Juvenile halls conduct mock escape and other emergency drills to reinforce common policies and procedures among responding agencies.
41. Probation inventory its radios, and report to County Police each radio's assignment location for use in tracing radio transmissions.

In addition to County Police, Probation is arranging notification protocols with the neighboring University of Southern California (USC) police force in the event of an escape. The potential exists that a minor would traverse the grounds of USC's facilities while fleeing from CJH or the LAC+USC Medical Center. Inclusion of the USC police force in notification protocols will aid in the development of a secure perimeter, and initiate USC Police Officer awareness of the potential presence of a fleeing felon on University property.

Recommendation

42. Probation collaborate with the University of Southern California's police force to arrange notification protocols in the event of an escape.

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LADDERS IN LIVING UNITS

The escaping minors may have utilized a small ladder to compromise a portion of the height of a building that then provided access to CJH's perimeter wall. It is theorized that the ladder was propped at its base against an approximately three-foot tall tree stump, and leaned against a storage building to provide an elevated point at which to traverse towards the perimeter wall.

The minors retrieved the ladder from the custodial closet within the SHU. The ladder belongs to ISD, and is used by staff from both Probation and ISD to perform routine maintenance and painting. Ladders, regardless of size, present an unreasonable temptation and potential safety hazard to detained youth. ISD has completed the expeditious removal of all ladders from living units.

Recommendations

- 43. Ladders within juvenile halls must be locked per existing policy when not in use, and stored out of sight and outside of living units.
- 44. Probation staff working after dark should not have access to ladder locks.

GIFTS FOR MINORS

Minors are occasionally brought gifts from family members, social workers, clergy, and others. Gifts frequently include reading materials, but may include food, clothing, writing instruments, and personal hygiene items. One of the escapee minors was given a slice of cake. The cake was brought into the facility for staff by a religious volunteer, and sliced by Probation staff. A staff person gave the slice of cake to minor Sandoval. Drugs, poisons, weapons, and other contraband can be concealed within commercially produced or homemade cakes and other foods.

Juvenile halls are staffed by contract food service workers who provide meals that meet or exceed applicable nutritional guidelines. In addition, the Probation Department has a full-time staff nutritionist who monitors the content, quality, caloric content and nutritional value of menus and meals for detained youth. Thus, the provision of food to minors by visitors, social workers, and others from the community, however well intentioned, is unnecessary and a potential health and security risk. Effective immediately the provision of food to minors in juvenile hall by non-Probation staff or non-Probation-contracted food service workers, including provision by visitors, social workers, mental health staff, and others from the community will not be permitted.

Recommendation

45. Probation cease the practice of allowing the provision of food and drink to minors in juvenile hall by non-Probation staff or non-Probation-contracted food service workers, except where medically necessary. This restriction precludes, but is not limited in its restriction, to the provision of food to juvenile hall minors by visitors, family members, social workers, mental health staff, clergy, volunteers, and others from the community.

AUGUST 6, 2002 INCIDENT BACKGROUND

Minor Steven Frazier (DOB 10/18/85, Charge 211, robbery) was transported by a single CJH staff to a specialty medical clinic at LAC-USC for a scheduled visit. At the conclusion of the medical services the CJH staff lost line-of-sight supervision of the minor. The minor departed the medical office and was noted to be missing a few minutes later. LAC+USC security personnel, County Police, LAPD, and CJH's Movement and Control unit were notified. A search of the surrounding area was unsuccessful. Following the search, the minor's family was notified of his escape, and a request for a bench warrant was submitted to the Court.

Probation policy requires that detained minors transported out of juvenile halls, whether to court or to medical appointments, are to be restrained at the ankles and wrists. In addition, staff who transport minors from the halls are to maintain line-of-sight supervision at all times.

Minor Frazier was reported by the transporting staff to be in ankle shackles at the time of his escape. Ankle shackles allow for sufficient freedom of leg movement to maintain a limited walking stride. Minor Frazier's wrist restraints had been removed during his medical appointment, and would be expected to be replaced per policy in preparation for transport back to CJH. At the time of his escape, minor Frazier's wrist restraints had not been replaced.

Probation is investigating why minor Frazier was allowed to leave the CJH staff's line-of-sight supervision. In addition, we are attempting to confirm if minor Frazier had shackles applied around his ankles. Departure from line-of-sight supervision requirements and restraint policies would result in serious disciplinary action by the Department. The transporting staff states that he located the ankle shackles in the clinic area during his search for the minor.

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The departure of a minor from line-of-sight supervision is contrary to Department policy. The investigation of this escape has resulted in our development of security enhancements specific to transportation of minors, and the need to emphasize among staff the importance of their familiarity with existing policies and procedures.

The level of sophistication, and relative portions of each minor's prior detention and criminal background, including gang affiliation, is of importance to those who come into regular contact or who transport minors. The prior criminal background, as discussed relative to the July 31 incident, exposes those minors who, through their criminal acts, have demonstrated a propensity to commit more heinous acts. In addition, detention records can reveal minors with a propensity to attempt escape, and the frequency of attempts. An increasing pattern of criminal activity and/or a history of attempted escape, combined with an evaluation of the minor's intellectual sophistication and physical size, may result in the need to have additional staff accompany transported minors. In addition, we will develop notification protocols required of juvenile hall staff transporting minors to medical clinics if restraints are considered for removal while a minor is outside the secure perimeter of the juvenile hall.

Recommendations

46. Probation emphasize to staff the importance of following established policies and procedures for transporting minors such as maintaining visual contact, and transporting with appropriate ankle and wrist restraints.
47. Effective immediately, a minimum of two staff will accompany each juvenile hall minor transported to specialty medical appointments.
48. Probation incorporate protocols into existing procedures for juvenile hall staff transporting minors to medical clinic appointments that require notification of the Officer-of-the-Day prior to removal of restraints while the minor is outside the secure juvenile hall perimeter.
49. Probation will develop a brief summary of the size, sophistication, and criminal history of each minor being transported out of juvenile hall to clinic appointments to ensure maximum awareness of the concerns relative to each minor's propensity for violence and/or escape. Transporting staff will document their review of a minor's background summary prior to departing for an appointment.

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In Fiscal Year 2001-02, 8,888 specialty medical appointments were attended by juvenile hall minors. Each appointment required transport and supervision of minors from one of Probation's three juvenile halls to a clinic in the community. This equates to approximately 34 clinic visits per weekday, and is in addition to the transport and housing of wards from any of nineteen Probation camps to juvenile halls while they await medical appointments. It is also in addition to court appointment transportation needs. The most frequent medical specialties for which minors are transported out of juvenile hall are optometry, radiology, orthopedic, and advanced dental care.

Basic health care for detained youth within the secure perimeter of CJH is provided by medical staff of Juvenile Court Health Services (JCHS), an organizational unit of the County's Department of Health Services (DHS). Medical services within the juvenile halls are limited by the availability of specialty equipment, but more often by the limited availability of on-sight specialty physicians. For example, JCHS indicates that one orthopedic specialist providing services for a half-day each week could meet the majority of the orthopedic needs of our detained youth. This would eliminate the need for secure transport of a majority of the 1,481 minors seen at the orthopedic clinic. However, JCHS has had difficulty identifying an orthopedic physician willing to provide those services within CJH.

Probation is collaborating with DHS/JCHS to arrange for the provision of designated specialty medical services within juvenile halls, and at regional settings such as Challenger Memorial Youth Center in Lancaster. DHS has obtained a grant for the purchase of a mobile eye examination trailer that will be available later this year to provide on-site services on designated days. Innovative solutions such as the grant-funded eye examination trailer will further the potential to provide medical services directly within detention facilities.

Specialty services for the Sheriff's jail population are generally provided at LAC+USC or its surrounding clinics. The Sheriff has used a jail ward within the LAC+USC complex as a staging area for inmates' medical needs. The jail ward's security needs are met by Deputy Sheriffs, and medical services to the extent possible are provided on the ward. For those specialties requiring movement through the LAC+USC campus, jail ward Deputy Sheriffs transport the inmates. The feasibility of a similar arrangement for detained youth will be discussed with DHS management.

The Sheriff's inmates who are transferred outside of jail, including to medical appointments, are identified by uniquely colored jail clothing that is readily identifiable as an inmate. In the event an inmate should break away from a deputy's supervision, the inmate is easier to identify based on the jail clothing. Probation transports its minors to clinic visits in relatively nondescript clothing.

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Probation is evaluating the appropriateness of transferring minors to medical clinic appointments in bright clothing that would make a fleeing minor easier to locate.

A minor's acquaintances, including gang associates, are at times willing to assist a minor in escaping the custody of Probation if given the opportunity. The relatively open setting and multiple escape routes surrounding a medical clinic create a greater potential for an escape attempt. If the minor has help with an escape, the likelihood of the escape being successful can increase.

Minors are allowed some telephone calls while in juvenile halls. Though Probation attempts to monitor calls not protected by a fiduciary privilege, at times a minor may be able to relay an upcoming medical visit schedule. This information can be passed along to friends and gang associates who may rendezvous with the minor at the clinic. This creates a potentially dangerous situation for staff and the public. Though staff exercise caution when transporting minors, the presence of gang associates can create the potential for wrongdoing. Probation needs to limit advance notice of clinic visits, and closely monitor minors' telephone conversations.

Probation and DHS will continue to collaborate on solutions to reducing specialty medical clinic visits for detained youth that require transport outside of the secure juvenile hall perimeter. Probation and DHS will collaborate with the Board of Supervisors and CAO to incorporate discussions of funding limitations relative to the method of delivery of medical services to detained youth.

Recommendation

50. Probation and DHS determine the feasibility of a jail ward arrangement for the medical needs of detained youth.
51. Probation evaluate the appropriateness of transferring minors to medical clinic appointments in bright clothing that would make a fleeing minor easier to locate.
52. Probation limit advance notice of clinic visits, and closely monitor minors' telephone conversations.
53. Probation and DHS continue to collaborate to reduce specialty medical clinic visits that require transport of detained youth outside of the secure juvenile hall perimeter.
54. Probation and DHS will collaborate with the Board of Supervisors and CAO to incorporate discussions of funding limitations relative to the method of delivery of medical services to detained youth.

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The Probation Department is collaborating with law enforcement and other County agencies on the investigation of the escapes, in conjunction with our own internal investigation. We will report back to your Board within 60 days on the status of the investigation, and the implementation of the recommendations in this report.

ATTACHMENT I

ESCAPE ATTEMPTS

The table below highlights escape attempts at each of the juvenile halls since January 2000. This historical escape attempt data should be viewed with consideration for variables such as:

- greater overall numbers of minors admitted to the facilities,
- increased detention of unfit minors within juvenile facilities,
- increasing numbers of violent offenders,
- minors' substance abuse just-prior to detention,
- greater numbers of minors with mental health issues,
- elevated gang rivalry / increasing gang affiliation,
- minors' decreasing concern for societal norms regarding miscreant behavior, and
- technological improvements in the tracking of escape data.

JUVENILE HALL	ESCAPE ATTEMPTS			ESCAPES		
	2000	2001	2002	2000	2001	2002
BJNJHJH	18	22	21	0	0	1
CJH	23	27	5	2	2	3
LPJH	11	25	6	0	1	0
TOTALS:	52	74	32	2	3	4

Number of escapes equates to number of minors, not number of incidents. Data for 2002 through March.
Approximately 30,000 youth are admitted to Los Angeles County's juvenile halls each year.

ATTACHMENT II

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Minors housed in wet rooms are to be provided with paper cups overnight to prevent the need to open doors during sleeping hours.
2. Probation staff are to follow existing procedures and ensure sinks in occupied wet rooms are operational.
3. Minors' doors are not to be opened during sleeping hours except for a safety or medical emergency.
4. Probation ensure that staff are aware of and comply with current policy that if a minor's door must be opened during sleeping hours, one staff will be stationed within close proximity to a panic button or knock-off telephone until the minor is secured in his/her room.
5. Prior to opening a door, staff are to visually inspect the minor by ordering him/her to turn in a complete circle with arms out to his/her sides. Loose clothing is to be lifted to expose potential contraband hiding places.
6. Ensure the CJH metal detector is operating properly.
7. Implement a new policy that all walk-in persons entering juvenile halls must pass through a metal detection device.
8. All persons will be effectively cleared prior to being allowed entry if a metal detection device signals a potential security issue.
9. To the extent possible, all juvenile halls are to enforce a single point of entry for all walk-in entrants.
10. All bags/items entering the facility, and delivery and construction vehicles and drivers will be subject to screening, escort, and/or a thorough search.
11. Probation will work with the CAO to identify funding for the purchase of a baggage screening machine for CJH.

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12. Random, documented searches will be conducted of the possessions and/or vehicles of all persons entering the facility, including staff, contractors, educators, health workers, trades people, volunteers, and delivery persons except to the extent necessary to protect information created as part of a fiduciary duty of confidentiality provided by statute.
13. Probation should consider contracting for entrance security specialists with responsibility to consistently enforce entrant screening protocols.
14. Probation, in collaboration with the Sheriff and the Court, explore the efficacy of moving all unfit minors and 18-year-olds into Sheriff custody.
15. Probation examine the use of vacant portions of the Lynwood Justice Center to house unfit minors.
16. Probation review the process for transferring minors to the California Youth Authority, and expedite the process where possible.
17. Probation develop criteria for the scope of personal items staff may bring into juvenile halls.
18. Probation activate around-the-clock all CCTV cameras, including recording and archiving features where available.
19. Probation collaborate with the CAO and Board of Supervisors to identify resources to ensure the expeditious expansion of CCTV capability to all living units.
20. Probation plan for the implementation and staffing of on-demand observation capability from a centralized security post for all CCTV cameras. This will require movement of existing CCTV observation screens to an area accessible to assigned security observation staff.
21. Probation consider hiring specialized staff to monitor CCTV activity.
22. Probation ensure panic buttons are available within all living units, and that staff are aware of and drilled in the appropriate response when alarms activate.
23. Probation consider the use of radios with panic button functionality for use within its juvenile halls, and work with the CAO and Board of Supervisors to identify applicable resource needs.

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24. Staff will receive regular refresher training, as is currently available, on proper dorm search techniques.
25. Minors' room assignments will be randomly altered to reduce the opportunity for longer-term concealment of contraband.
26. Facility managers enforce and regularly review key controls, and conduct periodic key inventories. Disciplinary action should be taken when key control procedures are not followed.
27. Probation establish a system where staff identification is exchanged for an interior facility key at the start of each shift.
28. Perimeter door locks should be re-keyed. Facility perimeter access keys need to be restricted to a very limited number of critical staff including the Superintendent, Maintenance Manager, and Officer-of-the-Day.
29. Minors are to be escorted, and staff appropriately positioned, according to existing policy whenever minors are allowed out of rooms during sleeping hours.
30. Staff receive enhanced training on appropriate protocols in the event of a potential or actual hostage situation.
31. Probation provide the CAO and Board with an assessment of additional perimeter and facility security needs.
32. Probation arrange for the removal of all trees that are in close proximity to the perimeter wall or abutting structures.
33. Replace all barbed wire protection with razor wire.
34. Rooftop motion and/or heat activated floodlights and, where necessary, CCTV be installed at all juvenile halls to facilitate the safe identification of the whereabouts of fleeing minors.
35. Probation identify a staff on overnight shifts to patrol the interior perimeter of the facility.
36. Probation install strategically placed motion and or heat sensing lights, along with a remote controllable CCTV camera, along the portion of the perimeter wall adjacent to ISD's storage yard.

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37. Probation and County Police implement regular daily schedules for dedicated County Police patrols between the hours of 8:00 PM and 6:00 AM.
38. Each day Probation supply the on-duty County Police Officer with a radio that provides direct communication to Probation's Officer-of-the-Day.
39. Every fifteen minutes while on patrol the on-duty County Police Officer will communicate with designated Probation staff to ensure awareness of pertinent information.
40. Juvenile halls conduct mock escape and other emergency drills to reinforce common policies and procedures among responding agencies.
41. Probation inventory its radios, and report to County Police each radio's assignment location for use in tracing radio transmissions.
42. Probation collaborate with the University of Southern California's police force to arrange notification protocols in the event of an escape.
43. Ladders within juvenile halls must be locked per existing policy when not in use, and stored out of sight and outside of living units.
44. Probation staff working after dark should not have access to ladder locks.
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